

E - 325,351  
S - 396,682

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## BOOKS of the Day

Maybe the CIA  
was just sneaky  
and not stupid

**THE POLITICS OF HEROIN  
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**, by Al-  
fred W. McCoy with Cathleen  
B. Read & Leonard P. Adams  
II (464 pages; Harper & Row;  
\$10.95).

By H. G. Summers, Jr.

Suppose you were in the  
CIA, and the President had  
just declared an all-out war  
on drugs. Being devious and  
Machiavellian by nature, what  
would be the best way to im-  
plement the presidential ed-  
ict?

How about taking a relative-  
ly good book by a team of  
young researchers, a book  
that already included an at-  
tack on the U.S. role in Viet-  
nam which would appeal to  
persons who dote on such  
things, and spicing it up by  
some rather innocuous and  
dated attacks on the CIA. Al-  
ready portrayed as the devil  
incarnate by the left, a few  
more attacks couldn't hurt.

Now then, how to get the  
book in the public eye? What  
better way than to demand  
censorship rights over the  
manuscript. That would raise  
a guaranteed hue and cry  
across the political spectrum  
because nothing—thank God—  
is so sacrosanct in American  
society as the rights of a free  
press.

Fanciful you say? Not near-  
ly so fanciful as half of the  
sins Alfred McCoy accuses the  
CIA of in his book. And look  
at the results. The prepubli-  
cation censorship was so weak  
(the publisher said that he  
was "underwhelmed" by the  
CIA comments) that reported-  
ly not a word was changed in  
the manuscript. The news of  
the censorship was leaked to  
the press and sparked editori-  
als in the New York Times,  
the Washington Post, and  
countless other newspapers.  
The Star ran an excellent  
column in the Book Section on the



### A brand you can trust?

evils of CIA harassment—an  
article marred only by the ac-  
companying editorial cartoon  
that showed the Pentagon  
grabbing an author's typewri-  
ter. But I suppose that the  
Pentagon is better identified  
in the public mind than Lang-  
ley where the CIA really  
hangs its hat.

The CIA, in effect, worked a  
double blessing. It insured  
high-level attention and pub-  
licity on McCoy's book, which  
is being faithfully reviewed by  
most of the major publica-  
tions, and they focus public  
attention on the evils of  
government censorship. The  
taxpayers got their money's  
worth in this CIA caper.

Let me hasten to add that I  
claim no inside information on  
this caper. Maybe the CIA  
was just ham-handed enough  
to demand pre-publication  
censorship without malice of  
forethought... but I'd rather  
believe that our highest level  
intelligence agency was  
sneaky rather than believe  
they were merely stupid.

If you are naturally suspi-  
cious, there is other evidence  
as well. According to James  
Markham in the New York  
Times, "a former CIA agent"  
told Seymour Hersh that Mc-  
Coy's assertions are "10 per  
cent tendentious and 90 per  
cent of the most valuable con-  
tribution I can think of. He's a  
very liberal kid, and he'd like  
to nail the establishment. But  
some leading intelligence offi-  
cers inside the Government's  
program think that his re-  
search is great."

Not only that, but McCoy's  
book, which purports to attack  
the CIA, actually credits the  
agency with being 10 feet tall,  
of having history-bending  
powers, of saving (Godfather  
forgive us) the Mafia from ex-  
tinction after World War II.

Disregard the "tendentious  
10 per cent"—the rather puer-  
ile political judgements where  
McCoy wavers between con-  
demning the CIA for being the  
policeman of the world, and

demanding that the United  
States act as the policeman of  
the world in the Golden Tri-  
angle in Southeast Asia (how  
many divisions would it take  
to subdue the Shan States in  
Burma that neither the Brit-  
ish nor the present Burmese  
Government could police and  
control?)

Disregard the sometimes ju-  
venile writing style—"In 1852  
King Mongkut (played by Yul  
Brynnner in the King and I)  
bowed to British pressure."  
That's like writing "At Get-  
tysburg, Abraham Lincoln  
(played by Raymond Massey)  
said..." McCoy also notes  
"a brutal Chinese pacifica-  
tion campaign (in South  
China) rather similar to the  
one launched by the U.S.  
Seventh Cavalry against the  
Great Plains Indians." Why  
"7th Cavalry"? All they dis-  
tinguished themselves for was  
getting massacred at the Lit-  
tle Big Horn. It's racist of Mc-  
Coy to ignore the all-black  
10th Cavalry which played a  
much more important role in  
the pacification of the West.

Disregard all that, for the  
book does give valuable in-  
sights into the mechanics of  
the heroin trade. McCoy's ex-  
amination of the depth and  
scope of the Asian opium  
trade is particularly timely  
since this aspect was ignored  
until our own ox was gored.  
When only the "heathen Chi-  
nese" smoked opium, the U.S.  
was singularly uninterested in  
the problem.

Read McCoy's "90 per cent  
valuable contribution" that  
the CIA was kind enough to  
bring to your attention, but do  
not be misled by his conclu-  
sion. It is a cop-out to say  
that "in the final analysis the  
American people will have to  
choose between supporting  
doggedly anti-Communist  
governments in Southeast  
Asia or getting heroin out of  
their high schools." It is not  
that simple.

As James Markham point-  
ed out in his New York Times  
review, "American addicts  
need only 60 to 100 tons of  
opium a year to feed their  
habits... This amount of opi-  
um can be grown on five to 10  
square miles of arable, upland  
country land—in Burma, in  
India, in Turkey, in Mexico,

continued